

# 19



ROOM TO GROW

When I started thinking about a devotional, I thought that it would be fun to write one with Canon. He, on the other hand, did not like the idea. So, the stubborn mother in me decided to “make” him do it. It would be fun...he would see. Boy, was I wrong. As much as I pushed, talked about Bible stories that he likes, the more he pushed back. I wrestled with it and with him all day today.

Tonight, as he was finishing dinner, Canon asked if he could get on his computer. I agreed, and logged him on. A few minutes later I heard it. Worship music blaring out of the computer and out of my sweet boy! Of course! What was I thinking? No matter how frustrating or hard his day is, Canon, at some point, always comes back to worship music. His favorite song is different every time I ask, but tonight he said that he loved “Lord, I Need You.” We started singing together and I asked what this song means to him. This is a difficult concept for Canon to grasp, so I broke the song down and we talked about the meaning of each line/verse. Finally, Canon said, “Mom, the song means that I need Jesus.” True, baby, so true.

Today, let’s sing our prayer to Jesus:

Lord, I Need You / Lord I come, I confess / Bowing here, I find my rest / Without You, I fall apart / You're the one that guides my heart / Lord, I need You, oh, I need You / Every hour, I need You / My one defense, my righteousness / Oh God, how I need You / Where sin runs deep, Your grace is more / Where grace is found is where You are / And where You are, Lord, I am free / Holiness is Christ in me / Lord, I need You, oh, I need You / Every hour, I need You / My one defense, my righteousness / Oh God, how I need You / So teach my song to rise to You / When temptation comes my way / And when I cannot stand, I'll fall on You / Jesus, You're my hope and stay / Lord, I need You, oh, I need You / Every hour, I need You / My one defense, my righteousness / Oh God, how I need You

# 20



ROOM TO GROW

“Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”  
(Matthew 11:28-30)

It is so easy to get lost in the hustle bustle of our everyday lives and forget to rest; rest from physical labor, rest from fear and worry, and to rest in the Lord’s presence. While the world is constantly demanding so much from us, Jesus simply asks us just to rest. How amazing is that? The rest that He gives is unlike any other, reaching to the depths of our heart and soul. Are you willing to pause and receive that rest from the Lord?

Jesus, I come to You and ask for Your rest and peace. Allow me to sit in Your presence and let You do all of the work. In this time of rest, help me reflect on Your goodness and faithfulness. In the midst of busyness and chaos, help me to slow down, soak in Your presence, and receive Your great love and peace. Amen.

# 21



ROOM TO GROW

"Then David continued, "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Don't be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. He will see to it that all the work related to the Temple of the Lord is finished correctly". (1 Chronicles 28:20)

Since I began at AGCC, more than a dozen years ago, this verse has hung above my desk. Like Solomon, sometimes the vision/purpose/task God has laid before our church seems enormous. When, like Solomon, I begin to feel overwhelmed, David's wise and encouraging words remind me to keep my head up and get back to work.

Father God, as we embrace your vision for our church, To be a church striving to embody Grace & Truth as we Grow Followers of Jesus Christ, shield us from any feelings of doubt or discouragement. Instead, let our hearts be strong & our actions courageous. Let us live, and move, and breathe out of deep confidence that you are with us. Let's get to work. Amen

22



ROOM TO GROW

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing..."

*We encourage you to continue reading the rest of 1 Corinthians 13 in your bible.*

When we substitute LOVE for the word CHARITY, we understand how important it is to LOVE. We must love our neighbors as ourselves, especially during these chaotic times that we are facing in our nation and all over the world! We must know that God loves us; He is our refuge, our strength, and He is in control of all things

Dear Lord, we thank you for our blessings that you continually provide! Our prayers are for your blessings on all who are affected by so much tragedy in our world by hatred and chaos!! Please fill their hearts with LOVE! In Jesus name, Amen.

# 23



ROOM TO GROW

"Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from His love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose."

(Philippians 2:1-2)

Paul wrote this letter to the church in Philippi encouraging the people to "have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had." (v. 2:5) A key to doing this is to have "everyone working together with one mind and purpose." This is also the key to our Room To Grow campaign as we seek to implement the vision that God has given to this church. As we go through the rest of our time focused on God during the 40 days of prayer, then see the results in the coming months and years, we will see the value of one mind and purpose. It will be for "the glory of God the Father." (v. 2:11b)

Thank you God for the example of Christ Jesus in the way He lived on this earth. May You use this church for Your glory as we work together. In Jesus' name, Amen.

24



ROOM TO GROW

"Now this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us".

(1 John 5:14)

When you want guidance...Pray. When you travel...Pray. When you want to stop injustice...Pray. When you want healing...Pray. When you are tired of racism and division (so is God)...Pray...and he would love to talk about it. God did not call us to teach without ceasing, have meetings without ceasing or sing without ceasing. He did call us to PRAY without ceasing. God is moved by the humble, prayerful heart. He is moved when you come to him in prayer. In Mark 11:17 he tells us his house will be called a House of Prayer.

Thank you Lord for the privilege of prayer. We know we can talk to you about anything and everything. We know we stand the tallest when we are on our knees. Thank you for your son Jesus in whose name we pray. Amen

25



ROOM TO GROW

"People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."  
(Luke 18-15:17)

Dear Lord, I pray to be childlike in my loving and acceptance of you. I want to feel the uninhibited childlike joy and love of you. I ask to shine your light in all that I do. I ask to shine that light to our children and those in distress. I ask for your blessings on Aspen Grove as we endeavor to care for your children, orphans and those in distress. Please bless our congregation as we work to seek Grace and Truth and to grow followers of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.  
(James 1:27)

26



ROOM TO GROW

"Today I have given you a choice, between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth the choice that you make. Oh, that you choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! You can make this choice by loving the lord your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This is the key to your life." (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

Lord, you never said this life was going to be easy. You never said we wouldn't have unbearable struggles in life, but all of this pain is for a greater reward. Heaven.

By living our lives, EVERY SINGLE DAY, obeying your word, we get one step closer to never suffering again. Help me with this, Lord. Thank you for my blessings and thank you for choosing me. In Jesus' name, Amen.



27



ROOM TO GROW

"For God gave us a spirit not of fear, but of power and love and self-control." 2 Timothy 1:7

I use this verse as something like a spiritual checklist in my life. First of all, Paul wants us to know that the spirit God has gifted to us is not meant to be afraid and anxious all the time. Instead, when fear and doubt invade our hearts, let us live our lives with peace and joy, remembering that our reward awaits us in Heaven. Paul also reminds us that God gives us a spirit full of power and love. God made us to be powerful! It is His spirit within us that makes us powerful. We shine this power to the world around us by loving all of God's people, even when we don't want to, and even when they don't love us back. God's spirit within us allows us to be courageous, and love others when it is hard. Finally, the spirit living within us provides self-control, that we may resist temptation, and walk the path that God has laid out for us.

Dear Lord, you know the spirit that resides within me. Your plans for me are far greater than those I could ever make for myself. Let me always be mindful of what you made me to be; that I am equipped with power, and love, and self-control. May I continue to further the work of your kingdom and bring others closer to you. In Jesus' Holy Name, Amen.

# 28



ROOM TO GROW

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

(Matthew 5:16)

We are here on this earth to do good deeds, not for us, but for Him. I often reflect back on this verse to remind myself that everything belongs to Him. That our actions should point to Him. That we can be the light for others. That we can use that light to bring others to Him. It can be easy to forget how far our actions reach, but this short verse paints a clear picture of how we should live our daily lives, for Him.

Jesus, we ask that you continue to remind us to live a life that points to you. That we can be selfless and show up for those in need. We ask that you be with our church as we continue strive to be a light for you in everything we do. Amen.

29



ROOM TO GROW

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him, and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls."

(1 Peter 1:3-9)

Although we may not always immediately see how God is working in our lives, every struggle or trial we will ever experience has already been redeemed through the sacrifice of Jesus. Even in the moments when He feels far away or when we aren't sure what's next in store, we can pursue joy by faithfully surrendering our doubts and uncertainties to God, our provider and protector. What thoughts or circumstances are you allowing to steal your joy by weakening your trust in God's provision for your life?

Dear Lord, you are not a God of uncertainty or fear – you are the God of grace, truth, and peace. Help me to let go of any worries or doubts that are preventing me from trusting in Your plan for my life. Thank you for the promise of rebirth into eternal joy through the gift of your Son, Jesus. Amen.

30



ROOM TO GROW

"When I was really hurting, I prayed to the Lord. He answered my prayer, and took my worries away. The Lord is on my side, and I am not afraid of what others can do to me."

(Psalm 118:5-6)

Dear Lord, thank you for this day. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. God, sometimes things don't go as we want them to, but we have to do what you say. When we have worries, you take them away, and then we don't have to worry about them any more. God, some things in my life are difficult, and I feel overwhelmed. I'm thankful for your reminders that my power and strength comes from you. In your name, Amen

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts, and your minds in Christ Jesus."

(Philippians 4:6-7)